



**Kids' City Stakeholder Survey  
Autumn 2006**

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**KPMG Corporate Responsibility Programme**



## Kids' City Stakeholder Survey: Autumn 2006

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# Kids' City Stakeholder Survey: Autumn 2006

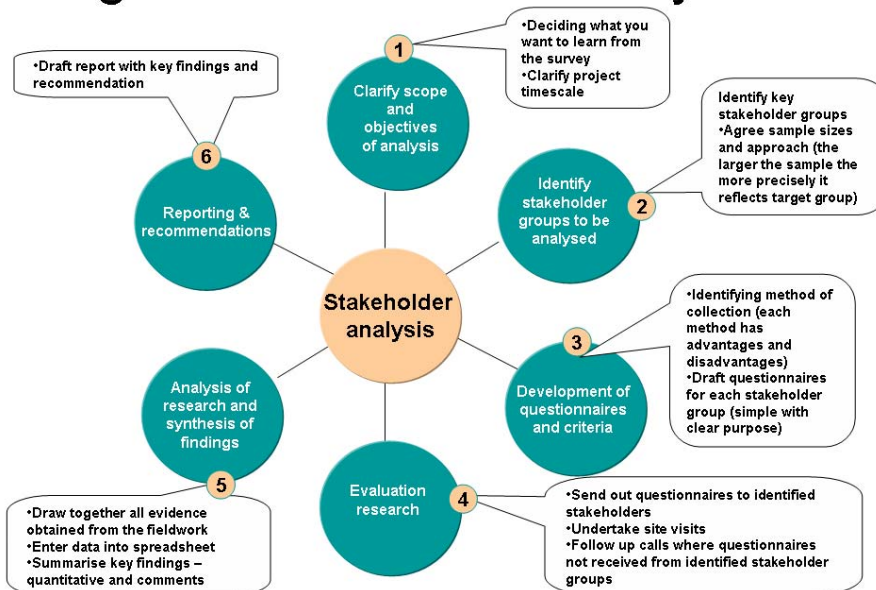
## Introduction

### Purpose of Stakeholder Survey

The purpose of the survey is to find out more about the attitudes of stakeholder groups towards the work being undertaken by the charity and the impact that re-branding has had on its stakeholders. Kids' City has recently re-branded from the Trojans Scheme, a name that is well known within Lambeth and Wandsworth – the areas in which the charity offers direct services to children.

The survey took place from July to September 2006 using a mixture of questionnaires and interviews. The survey process and questionnaires were designed jointly by Kids' City and an external consultant, Elizabeth Ramsay at KPMG. The following diagram summarises the stages of stakeholder analysis.

## Stages of stakeholder analysis



### Response rate

This report summarises views of Kids' City performance from a questionnaire survey of its main stakeholders. Questionnaires were sent to all groups of



stakeholders involved with Kids' City. Of the 453 stakeholders who we contacted we received 160 responses, representing an average response rate of 45%. The views of children were captured through on site visits with face to face interviews held with 57 children on site visits. As the following table demonstrates, there was a significant variation in response between different stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder group	No of stakeholders	No of surveys sent out / Stakeholders interviewed	No of surveys returned	% return
Children	900	60	57	95
Parents	900	50	23	46
Centre Managers	10	10	8	80
Playworkers	72	72	19	26
Volunteers	100	100	29	29
Kids' City Head Office Staff	14	14	12	86
Headteachers	14	14	5	36
Funding and partnership organisations	33	33	2	6
External Training Candidates	100	100	9	9
<b>Average response rate</b>				<b>45</b>

The survey results must be interpreted with caution given the relatively small number of respondents in some groups.

### Factors that influence response rate

We identify below some of the factors that may have influenced a lower response rate from some stakeholder groups

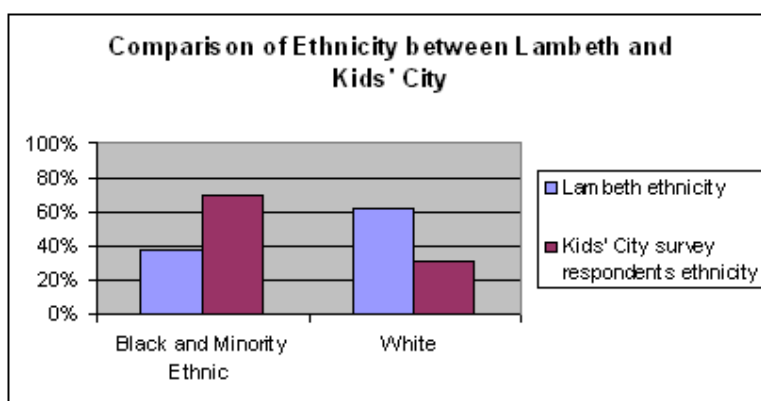
- Posted surveys had a far higher response rate to those e-mailed (approximately 90% better response rate).
- For headteachers and partnership and funding organisations telephone calls produced a higher response rate than e-mailed survey. Only one response was received from headteachers by the deadline.
- Completed questionnaires for parents were much higher when a representative of the stakeholder survey was on site to encourage completion and assist with any questions relating to the questionnaire
- Lower involvement with Kids' City meant that some groups felt they were not in a position to comment, for example, a number of the funding organisations indicated that they did not have sufficient information about Kids' City to comment on its work.

- Some funding organisations indicated that it was their standard policy not to feedback to funded organisations outside of the applications process.

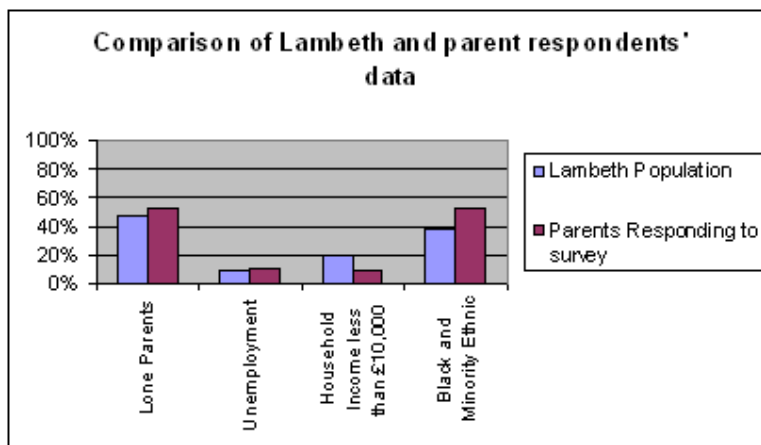
## Summary of stakeholder responses

### Profile of Stakeholders

- We asked stakeholders for details about their ethnicity, to understand whether the ethnicity of stakeholders aligned with the borough statistics. As demonstrated in the following two pie charts, Kids' City are more than meeting their targets for accessing the black and minority ethnic communities.



- Parents were asked additional questions about their employment status, salary and marital status to build a picture of whether the profile of parents using the services of Kids' City matches the profile of deprived families within Lambeth and Wandsworth. Kids' City's objective is to meet the needs of deprived families therefore this profile is important to their work. The following bar chart reflects the results from these questions, using data from Lambeth as a comparator



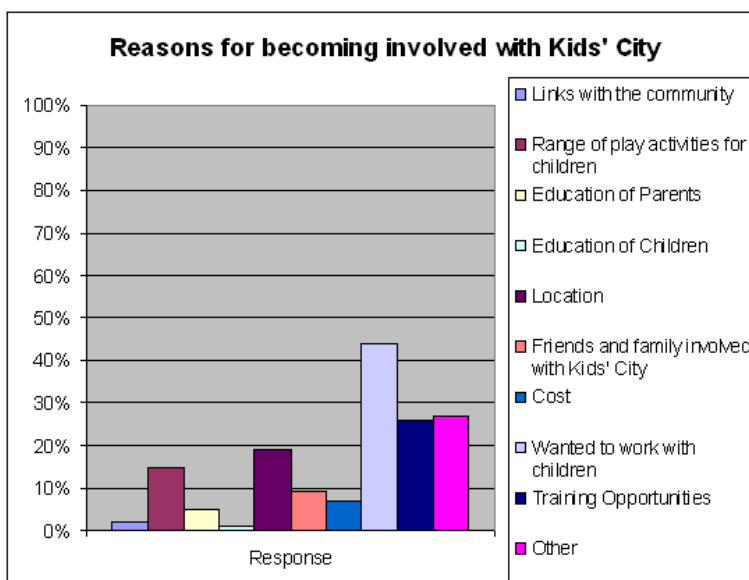
- The bar chart shows that Kids' City do appear to be accessing the profile of parents that they want to be supporting through their work, although perhaps more could be done to access poorer parents (perhaps by lowering the cost of services), since 9% indicated they had a salary of less than £10k per annum compared with 20% in the borough of Lambeth. However, it should be noted that only 3% of all parents estimated to access Kids' City service responded to this survey, therefore results cannot be taken as representative of all parents.

### Impact of re-branding

- We asked the stakeholders who are not employed or volunteering at Kids' City about the impact of the re-branding from the Trojans Scheme to Kids' City. Whilst the majority of these stakeholders indicated that they are aware that Kids' City is the same as the Trojans Scheme (91%), the response was overwhelmingly that the re-branding had not had an impact on their working with Kids City. 88% of stakeholders asked either said the re-branding had had no impact on their work with the charity, or that they did not know what the impact was. One Headteacher who indicated that the re-branding had had a significant impact felt that this was a negative impact, as the school was trying to move away from using slang and believed 'kids' to be a slang term.

### Reasons for becoming involved with Kids' City

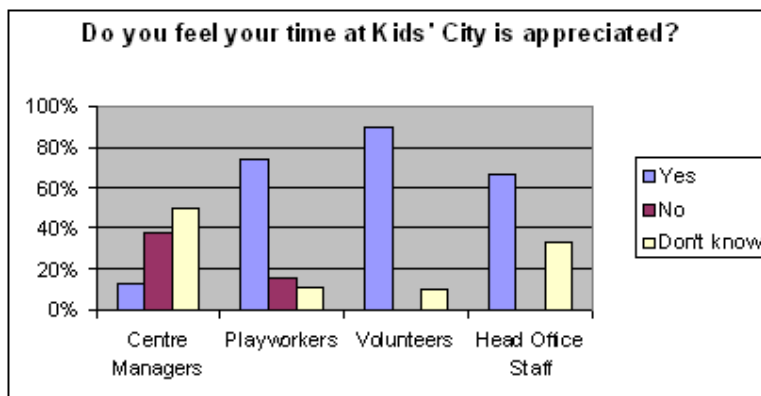
- Stakeholders were asked why they decided to become involved with Kids' City. They were allowed to give more than one answer to this question. The bar chart overleaf shows the results of this survey. The "opportunity to work with children" and "training opportunities" were the most important factors for staff and volunteers, whilst location and cost were the main factors for



parents. The range of play activities for children was the significant issue for the schools and partnership organisations that responded.

## Comparison of staff perceptions about Kids' City

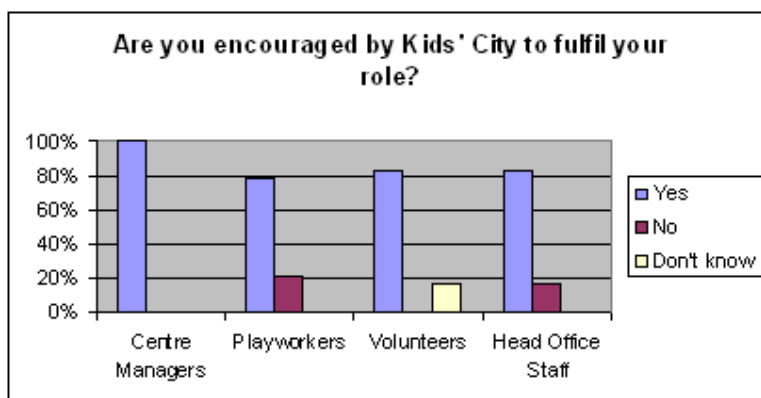
- We asked staff and volunteers whether they feel that their time at Kids' City is appreciated.** Whilst the overall response from staff was positive, Centre Managers stood out as a group who do not feel that their time is appreciated. This is shown in the bar chart below.



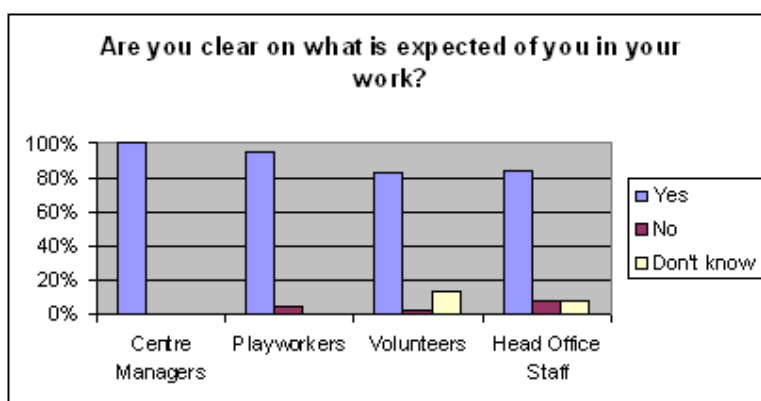
- We asked staff and volunteers whether they were given enough guidance to fulfil their role.** The overall response was positive, although Centre Managers again stood out as half of this group did not know whether or not they were receiving enough support. 21% of playworkers indicated that they did not feel that they were given enough guidance for their role. Results are shown in the bar chart below.



- We asked staff and volunteers whether they were encouraged by Kids' City to fulfil their role.** The overall response was very positive. Although 21% of playworkers did not feel they were encouraged by Kids' City to fulfil their role. This is shown in the bar chart overleaf.



- **We asked staff and volunteers whether they are clear on what is expected of them in their work.** The response was an overwhelming 'yes' as demonstrated in the bar chart below.

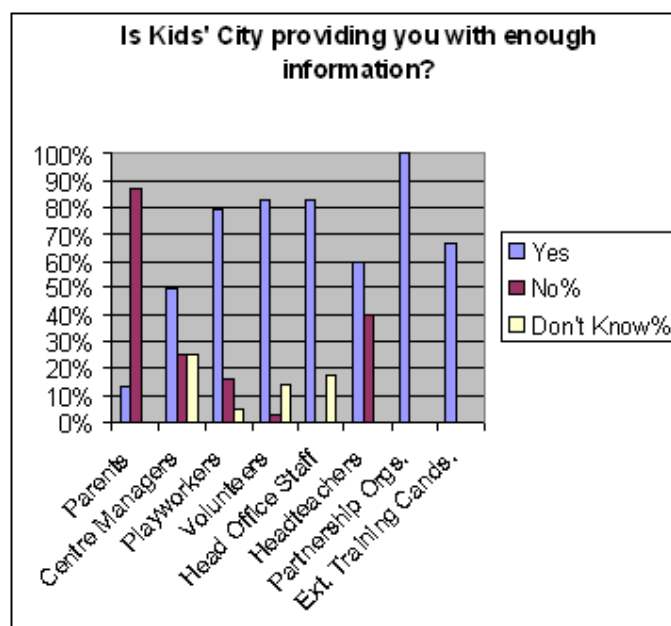


## Improving communications with stakeholders

- The majority of stakeholders were happy with the level of communication from Kids' City. Overall 63% felt that they were receiving enough information for their role
- Parents were one group who stood out as wanting to find out more about Kids' City (87% of parents). One parent noted that they would like to receive more feedback about the activities from staff when they pick their child up from a session. Letters were the preferred method of communication with 57% of parents indicating that they would like to receive letters about Kids' City activities.
- Headteachers were another stakeholder group who wanted better communication with Kids' City. This was linked to better joint working between Kids' City and the school. Suggestions included regular meetings to share information about each organisation and feedback on numbers of

children attending sessions, the activities taking place, and any potential issues like health and safety. The relationship between school staff and on site staff was seen as being key to this improved communication, with one Headteacher admitting “I know I can be difficult to get hold of”.

- A comparison of satisfaction with communication is reflected in the bar chart below.



## Communication with the wider community

- There were a number of suggestions for improving communication with the wider community. These included:
  - On site open evenings, open days or workshops for parents
  - Playground presence of Kids' City to sell their services. One staff member suggested that on site staff could be trained in customer relationship practice with more salesmanship on the ground e.g. talking to parents one-to-one at schools.
  - Taster sessions for children to encourage more children to get involved.
  - Leafleting of all parents in the schools and posters at the schools, with more publicity about how parents can get involved with the scheme. The local library/town hall and recreation centre were also suggested as possible venues for leafleting and posters about the service, as well as leafleting in schools not currently participating with Kids' City.

- Better advertising was seen as key, with local newspapers and websites being an important part of this publicity, as well as advertising in school newsletter and college publications
- Kids' City website was seen as needing to be updated regularly and the Kids' City name linked to search engines.
- A number of stakeholders suggested holding events and activities that encourage Kids' City children to bring along their friends, such as kids undertaking community projects during the holidays, or a local event or a school event that might get more parents interested in the service.
- More networking and partnership working was identified as key, with suggestions of more involvement with local voluntary and community groups, and/or involvement of local companies in sponsorship of Kids' City
- Sending information about Kids' City (and about volunteering and training courses in particular) to workplaces in Lambeth and Wandsworth was seen as another option for encouraging further engagement.
- Word of mouth was still seen as an important factor, with one playworker suggesting that if Kids' City ensure their staff are happy in their work setting they will provide a better service for the children and then the service will be more likely to be promoted through word of mouth.
- Publicity about new ways of costing the service was seen by parents and Headteachers as a way of encouraging more parents to get involved, with one parent suggesting a discount of 10% for siblings, and a number of Headteachers proposing weekly payment as a means of enabling more parents to be involved.
- One staff member suggested that Kids' City should lobby a sponsor in the House of Commons e.g. an M.P. who would champion the causes of the charity.

## Summary of how Kids' City can be improved

- **Wider range of activities:** A number of the stakeholders, including parents, employees and volunteers, suggested that a wider range of activities would improve the service to children. Proposals included more structured activities such as dance, drama and role play and generally staff playing more games with kids. Children interviewed echoed this view, with football, dancing and cricket rated highly, along with making things and having organised games with the staff.
- **Specialist instructors** - An additional suggestion for increasing the range of activities was to bring in more specialist instructors to educate the children,

with proposals ranging from music lessons to basketball teaching. This was suggested by parents, staff and Headteachers, with one parent saying “It would be fantastic if you had music lessons. If an additional fee was required I would be happy to pay it.”

- **More structured activities** - A few parents noted discipline and structure as important factors to maintain, and one suggested that outdoor activities and breakouts should be more structured. A number of staff and volunteers echoed the view that activities would run more successfully if they were better structured and prepared, with one staff member suggesting that planned activities could not always be run because facilities were not available on site. A few of the Headteachers interviewed suggested that better structured activities would increase the number of children involved in the scheme.
- **Wider variety of trips** – A number of stakeholders noted that organising more day trips with greater structure, with examples given of trips being theme parks, bowling and swimming and trips to the seaside.
- **Better equipment on site** – A number of the comments focused on the facilities for the children, suggesting new equipment be provided on site such as books, games and puzzles. One volunteer stated “I think that Kids’ City needs to improve their facilities for kids at the playschemes, for example, all the kids have at Sunnyhill playscheme is hoops, flat footballs and old skateboards.”
- **Improving Head Office support:** There were a number of suggestions for improving the support within and from the Head Office. Comments came from Head Office staff themselves, as well as staff on site and Headteachers. A significant proportion of on-site staff identified that they wanted to feel more appreciated by staff at Head Office and to be made to feel that they are working together. In particular Centre Managers recommended that there be an AGM for all staff. Head Office staff themselves also wanted improvements with suggestions including more procedures written up at the office to give staff guidance and appraisals with six month and year end objectives – personal and business. One member of staff indicated that there needs to be a cultural change in the way that Kids’ City deals with difficult situations, “less battle and more thoughts on how Kids’ City can benefit”. Some Headteachers picked up on the fact that they did not feel the relationship between Head Office staff and staff on the ground was always cohesive. One Headteacher suggested that management visits can sometimes aggrieve staff, who then leave the charity. This Headteacher felt uncomfortable feeding back areas for improvement direct to Kids’ City Head Office because they are concerned that their comments had not always been handled sensitively with staff.
- **Better Support to staff** – Whilst the majority of staff did feel that their contribution was valued and that they received sufficient information for their

role, a number were concerned about the level of support that they received from Kids' City. The recruitment, training and development of on-site staff and volunteers were noted as a key area for improvement by a number of staff. Suggestions for change included recruiting the right staff with experience in the playwork field and adequate qualifications and training for existing staff and volunteers in delivering activities.

- **Expansion of Kids' City** – The response from Partnership and Funding organisations suggested that an expansion of Kids' City services might improve their chances at being awarded greater funding, the reason being that it is not their funding policy to give repeat funding. Suggestions for expansion were also given by staff, with proposals including
  - Developing a more professional image to widen the appeal of Kids' City, with one suggestion being to move the offices to a business or professional area of London
  - Looking at other boroughs to provide the after school clubs
  - Increased direction and focus via a strategy and business plan including performance indicators, one suggestion was to offer the service to a greater mix of parents – not just those within poorer families
  - Gaining more funding to provide better resources and better working environments.
  
- **Cost** was seen as a problem for parents and two Headteachers suggested paying for sessions weekly so that more parents can access the service. One Headteacher conceded that “Cost is a problem for parents at our school. Asking for money up front for a term in advance means that some parents cannot afford to attend.”

## Views from each stakeholder group

### Childrens' Responses

- **Childrens' Profile:** We spoke with a total of 57 children at Kids' City sites. The age range of children interviewed was 5 – 11. The average age of the children we interviewed was 8. Most commonly children interviewed attended Kids City 3 times a week, but the children had a range of different combinations of attendance. The majority of children interviewed attended the after school club or a combination of the after school club and holiday club (66%).
- **Childrens' views:** The children interviewed liked a wide range of things about coming to Kids' City. Most children liked playing outside (44%), with related activities including scooters, skateboards, skipping, hula hoping, playing with bikes and football. In addition 11% of children liked playing or

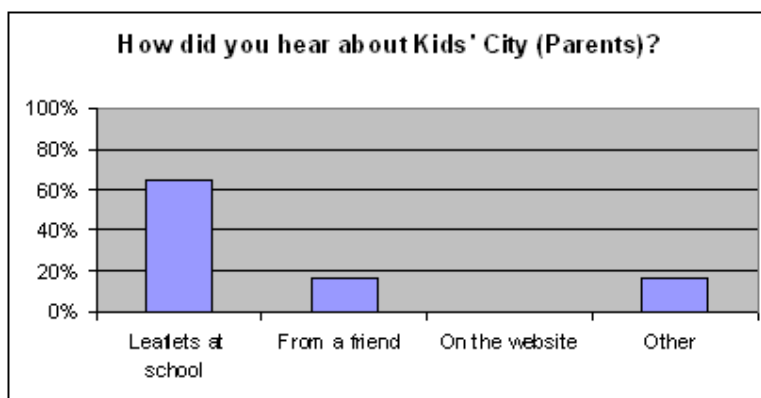
making things, 11% liked playing games and 13% indicated that what they most liked about Kids' City was playing with friends and meeting new friends. Other favourite activities at Kids' City ranged from cooking to freeplay to freedom to bring in toys to snacks.

- We asked children what they liked least about coming to Kids' City. The majority of Kids (65%) answered "don't know", or did not answer this question. However, 9% indicated freeplay (because it's boring) and 15% didn't like it when people were rude or naughty and when the group as a whole were punished. A few children didn't like specific activities like art and football (8%).
- We asked children what they are doing that is new and different. 14% of children indicated that they are not doing anything new or different at Kids' City. However the remaining 86% of children came up with a wide range of activities from "making stuff out of junk" to "ICT" to "Taekwondo" to "cooking" and "meeting new people".
- Children at Kids' City had a wide range of favourite hobbies with 27% enjoying sports, such as football, dodgeball, cricket, dancing and swimming, 19% enjoying making things, including drawing colouring and cooking, 12% enjoying outdoor activities like scootering and skipping and 7% enjoying quiet play activities like playing with computers. 9% of children said that their favourite hobby was free play and the remainder enjoyed other activities like drama, and watching videos.
- 93% of children spoken with had made new friends as a result of their involvement with Kids' City.
- We asked children what other things they would like to do at Kids' City. Their responses mirrored their hobbies, with sports activities such as dance club, swimming and cricket rated highly along with making things and having organised games with the staff. Quotes from children included "I'd like to go to the park more often", "I'd like to dress up more as a pirate, or a doctor or the incredible hulk!", "I'd like to make houses out of boxes" and "I'd like to colour in fish!"
- We asked the children what they would say to their friends about Kids' City. 81% of children gave positive responses, with 33% saying that they would tell their friends how much fun Kids' City is, with quotes including "There's a big field! It's really good fun!" to "It's really good. I want to get a job working at Kids' City", and "It's really, really fun – you should come along!" Other answers ranged from "you get to make choices about what you do" to "the snacks are nice". 9% of children indicated that they would say "it's good, but sometimes it's boring".

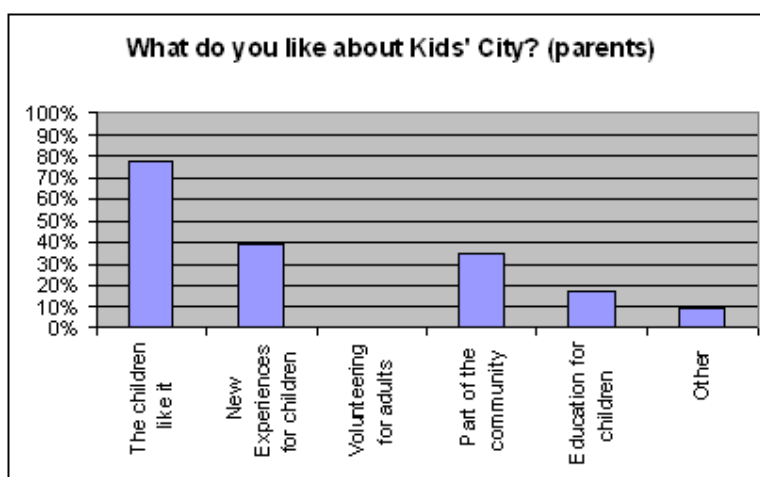
- 98% of children indicated that they enjoyed their snacks with 2% saying they could be better. We asked the children what snacks they would like to have more often (with an emphasis on fruit and vegetables). 74% indicated that they'd like to have more fruit at break time, with apples and oranges being the most popular fruits. 25% of kids wanted to have sweet things as snacks such as cake, chocolate and sweets. 19% of kids said they liked vegetable snacks, giving examples of tomatoes, carrots and cucumber 10% wanted sandwich wraps and crackers. 7% wanted crisps. (Children could give more than one answer.)
- To summarise the children interviewed were very happy at Kids' City, although they did have suggestions for more structured activities, and a small proportion identified the fact that their time at Kids' City could be boring.

## Parents' Responses

- 65% of parents questioned used the after school club, 57% used the holiday club, but only 9% used breakout sessions and 4% used breakfast club.
- The majority of parents indicated that they were using Kids' City services because of the location of the services (78%), cost was also a significant factor for 35% of parents and range of activities was a factor for 22% of the parents who responded. (Parents could tick more than 1 box). Other reasons for using Kids' City included the fact that the club is attached to the primary school, so provides an easy transition for their child and the importance of kids interacting with other children.
- The majority of parents heard about Kids' City through leaflets provided at their child's school (65%). For those who selected 'other' details included "through the school secretary", "via their work at a local partnership organisation (Lambeth PCT)" and "through their child's social worker".

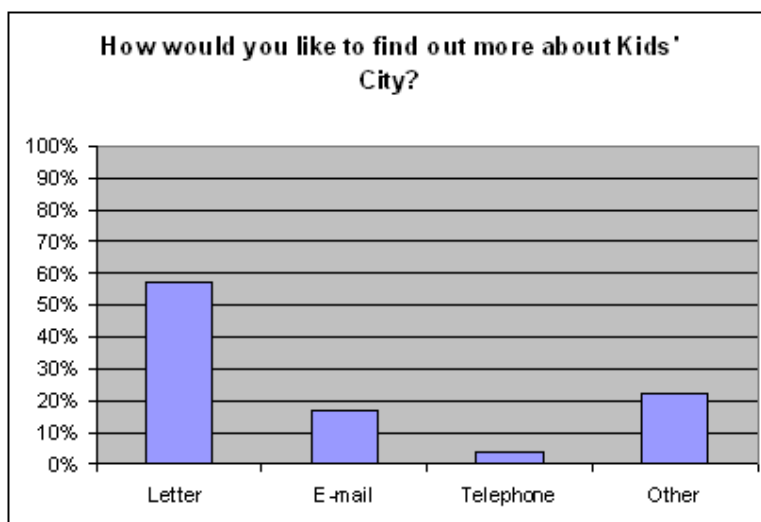


- In general, the survey indicates that parents are very happy with the service being provided. We asked parents to score the services that they were using out of 10, with 10 being high. The average school for both the after school club and the holiday club was 9/10, with scores ranging from 5/10 to 9/10. One parent commented that they use Kids' City because "It is important that children keep being creative during the holiday when parents are still working". Breakout sessions scored less highly at 7/10, one parent suggested "Breakouts could be better. The kids often go to the park, but perhaps they could go somewhere different like the seaside." There were no comments about breakfast club and it was not given a score by parents.
- The majority of parents (78%) indicated that they like Kids' City because their kids like it. One parent commented "My daughter thoroughly enjoys the atmosphere and mix of children at the playscheme". 39% of parents felt that Kids' City offers new experiences for children. One parent commented that "My son seems to enjoy a new experience outside his school routine". 35% of parents indicated that they like Kids' City because it is part of the community. The service scored less highly for the education of children with only 17% indicating that they feel the service was educational for children. These results are reflected in the bar chart below.



- 87% of parents were not involved in volunteering and were not thinking about becoming involved with volunteering. Interestingly in answering the previous question no of parents indicated that they liked Kids' City because it gave parents volunteering opportunities. One parent commented "I would like to volunteer, but have no free time whatsoever". This concurs with the profile from the volunteer survey, which is described later in the report, where the majority of volunteers who responded either did not have children, or had children over the age of 11 (i.e. above the Kids' City age).

- Only two parents indicated that their children had any special needs and 70% of parents were unclear on the support provided by Kids' City for children with special needs. However, parents did feel that it was essential to train staff in working with children with special needs, with 83% indicating that this should be the case.
- The impact of re-branding on parents was minimal, but the message has got through that the Trojans Scheme is now Kids' City with 91% of parents being aware of this.
- The majority of parents would like to find out more about Kids' City (87%) with letter being the preferred method of contact for 57% of parent, and e-mail for 17%. This suggests a literate and computer savvy parenting population, although results may be skewed because parents are more likely to complete the questionnaire if they are literate. Choices are reflected in the bar chart below:



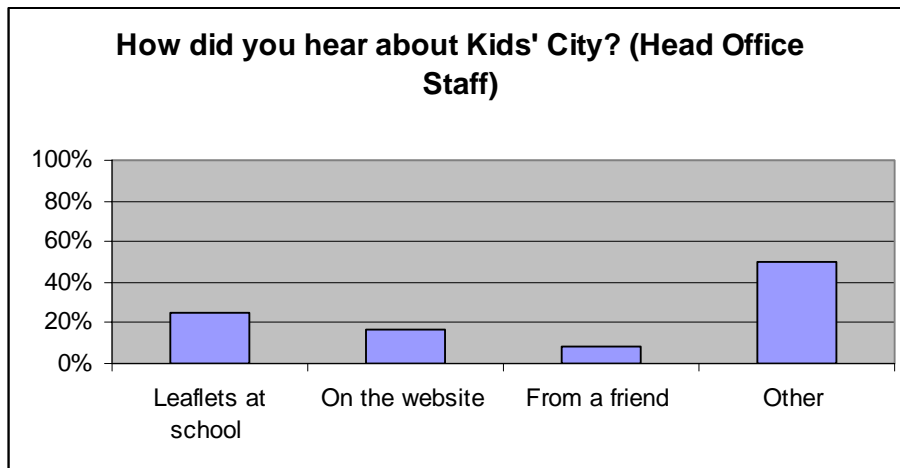
- Parents were asked to give their views on the new experiences that their children had had as a result of being part of Kids' City. New experiences ranged from knitting, to karate, to treasure hunts. Parents were impressed with external instructors brought in, such as artists and footballers. A number of parents noted that it was a good opportunity for children to make new friends, and get involved in social activities. One parent indicated that she likes Kids' City because her daughter "gets to do other things that she would not normally do in school."
- **Better communication with the wider community:** Parents suggested a number of ways of letting more parents and potential staff and volunteers know about Kids' City and the service that they offer. A few parents thought that mail and newsletters to school parents would be a good way of getting

publicity about the scheme and one suggested that articles in the school newsletter would reach more parents. Another suggestion was that all children in the school could be given a leaflet to take home to parents each term. One parent suggested that an inclusive local event or school event might get more parents interested in the service. Cost was noted as an issue by a few parents, with one parent suggesting a reduced cost by offering a 10% discount for siblings.

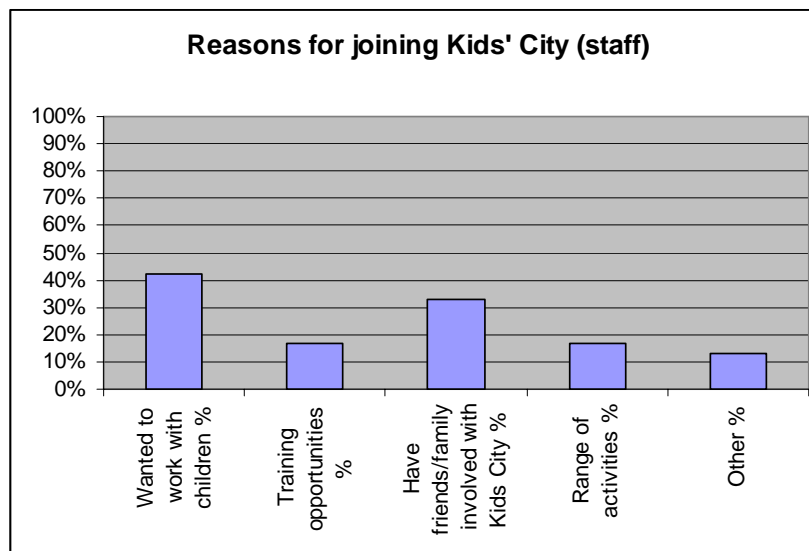
- **Improving the service:** Parents did have suggestions for improving the service to their children. A number of parents noted that they would like a greater variety of activities, such as drama and role play to learn about everyday life. This was noted as being particularly important for the older children. Building on this idea, one parent suggested that Kids' City could organise music lessons for kids, using external instructors, noting "It would be fantastic if you had music lessons. If an additional fee was required I would be happy to pay it."
- One parent noted that they would like to receive more feedback about the activities from staff when they pick their child up from a session. A few parents noted discipline and structure as important factors to maintain, and one suggested that outdoor activities and breakouts could be more structured and varied (such as going to the seaside).
- In summary parents were very happy with the service. One parent stated "I think Kids' City is doing a brilliant job, so not much could be improved." However, it should be noted that the parents involved in the survey will have a positive bias towards Kids' City, as all are using the services provided for their children. We were unable to access parents who are not using the service, or no longer using the service, due to the timing of the site visits in the school holidays, when only the parents accessing the service visited the school. Some of the views of non-participating parents are reflected in the comments of headteachers about the service that Kids' City provides.

## Head Office Staff Responses

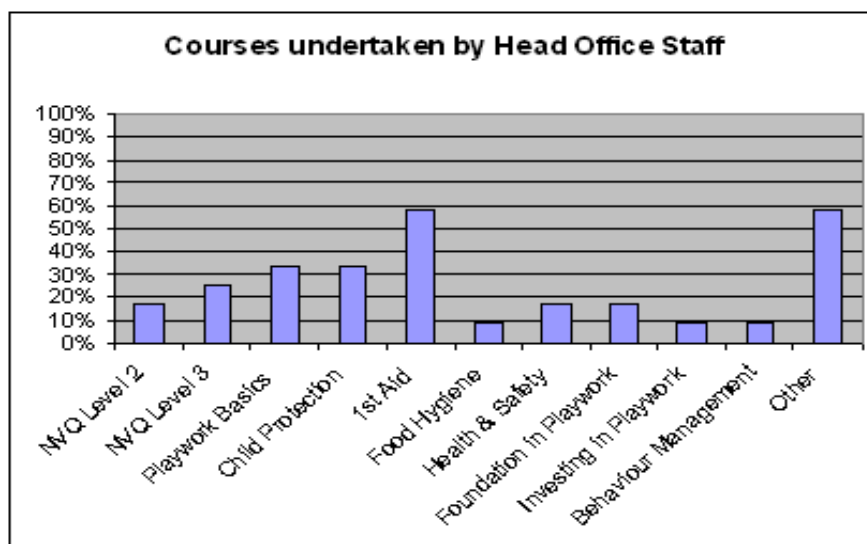
- The following bar chart demonstrates how staff heard about Kids' City. Of the Head Office staff who ticked 'other' sources than those given on the questionnaire, details included from the headteacher of a primary school, from work colleagues, from a recruitment agency and through family.



- The following bar chart shows reasons Head Office staff gave for joining Kids' City, demonstrating that the majority of Head Office staff joined Kids' City because they wanted to work with children. For Head Office staff who ticked 'other' reasons given were because a job became available which matched their existing skills and qualifications and that they were impressed by the benefits that Kids' City provides to the people it supports.



- Training opportunities were less important a factor in getting involved with Kids' City for this group of employees than for other groups, with only 17% putting this as a reason for being involved with Kids' City. That said 92% of Head Office staff have received some form of training with the remainder being new to the organisation and therefore awaiting training. The following bar chart shows the courses that staff have undertaken. Of the 58% of staff who are undertaking 'other' courses outside of the standard Kids' City course offerings, this includes accounting, and team work skills.

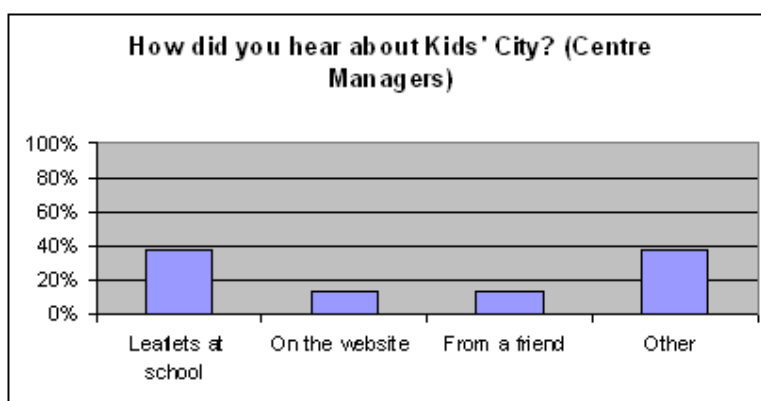


- 75% of staff found the courses that they have undertaken to be very useful or quite useful, with one staff member commenting that “career progression would not have been possible without training.” and another that “Skills have helped with professional development and been a key factor in improved performance”. For those staff who have not found the courses they have undertaken useful, this was noted as being due to the fact that the courses were not particularly relevant to their day-to-day office job.
- Aside from those staff who indicated that they are leaving Kids’ City, all staff wanted to receive more training, with proposals ranging from gaining a certificate in fundraising to a degree in management specific to their role.
- In general Head Office staff are happy with their role within the organisation with 100% feeling that their time is well used and 67% feeling appreciated by Kids’ City managers and parents. Whilst 84% of staff indicated that they are clear on what is expected of their work, there is an emerging issue around guidance and support with 17% feeling that they are being given enough guidance to fulfil their role and 25% indicating that they would welcome additional support to help develop their role. In particular, one member of staff commented “I feel there should be more positive consideration of potential and less focus on weaknesses or shortcomings when looking at the business case for further study.”
- 83% of staff who responded believe that they are being provided with enough information to support them in their role. Suggestions for improvement in communication included providing internal information and statistics more frequently and meeting more frequently with staff, particularly people on site.

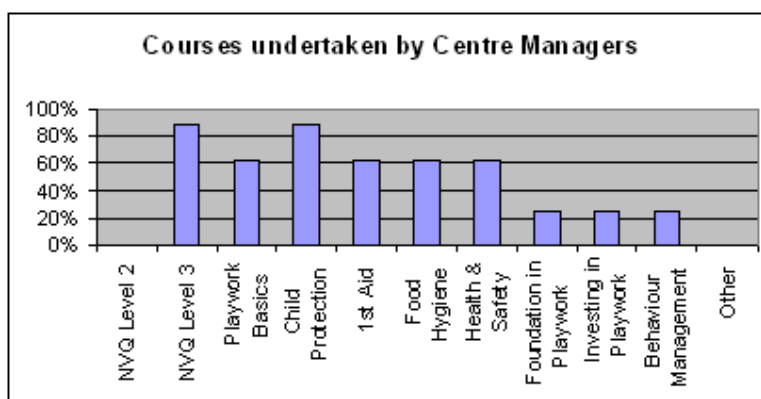
- **Better communication with the wider community:** Staff also had a number of suggestions for improved communication with the wider community. These included:
  - A more up-to-date website and making sure Kids' City name comes up on search engines
  - Greater market research
  - More publicity in library/town hall/recreation centre
  - Leafleting and posters at all primary schools across neighbouring boroughs
  - Comic strips for communicating with children
  - Customer relationship practice – more salesmanship on the ground e.g. talking to parents one to one at schools. This links to a point made by a number of the headteachers about maintaining a good relationship with the school through on the ground staff.
  - Increased local press presence
  - More networking and partnership working, perhaps through more involvement with voluntary and community groups
  - Identifying a sponsor in the House of Commons e.g. an M.P. who would champion the causes.
  
- **Improving the service:** A number of staff noted a desire for Kids' City to expand and suggestions for achieving this included
  - Developing a more professional image to widen the appeal of Kids' City, with one suggestion being to move the offices to a business or professional area of London
  - Look at other boroughs to provide the after school clubs
  - Increased direction and focus via a strategy and business plan including performance indicators, one suggestion was to offer the service to a greater mix of parents – not just those within poorer families
  - Gaining more funding to provide better resources and better working environments.
  
- The recruitment, training and development of on-site staff was noted as a key area for improvement by a number of staff. Suggestions included recruiting the right staff with experience in the playwork field, as well as adequate qualifications and training for existing staff and volunteers in delivering activities. There were a number of suggestions for improving the Head Office too, including more procedures written up at the office to give staff guidance and appraisals with six month and year end objectives – personal and business. One member of staff indicated that there needs to be a cultural change in the way that Kids' City deal with difficult situations, "less battle and more thoughts on how Kids' City can benefit".

## Centre Manager Responses

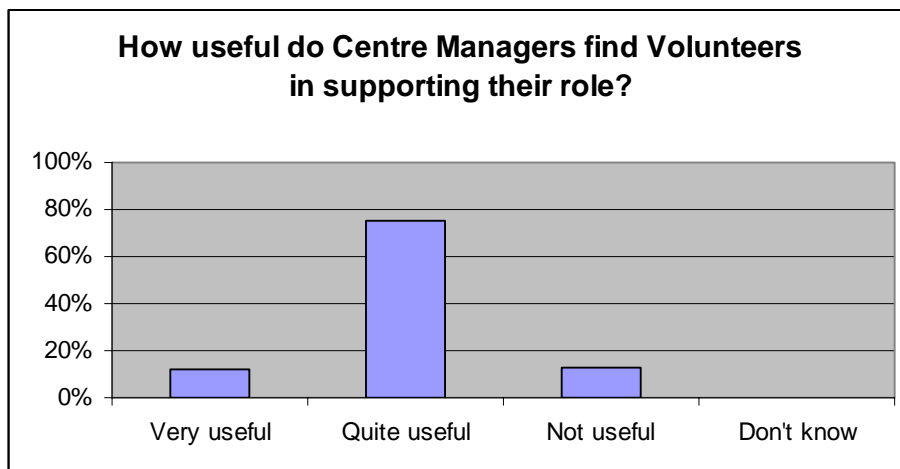
- All Centre Managers indicated that they became involved with Kids' City because of the opportunity to work with children, or the training opportunities or both.
- The majority of Centre Managers found out about Kids' City through leaflets at the school (38%) although the web was used by 13% and word of mouth was also an important factor for 13% of Centre Managers. Others found out about Kids' City through newspapers, or through the external training department.



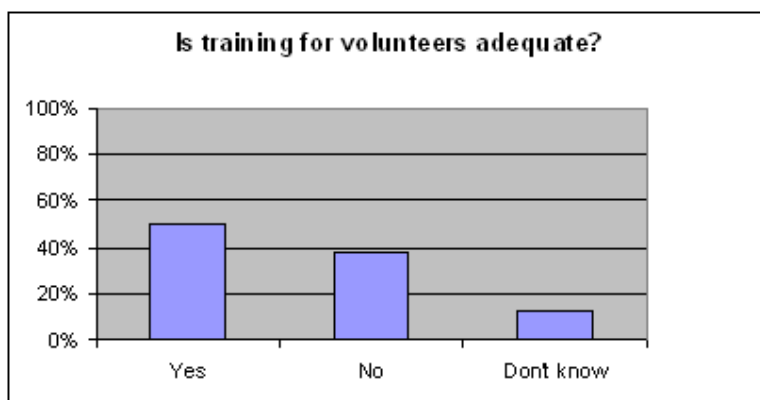
- 100% of Centre Managers have received training as part of their role of Centre Manager. The following bar chart shows the range of courses undertaken, with the majority having undertaken NVQ3 (88%) and Child Protection (88%).



- All Centre Managers found the training received in their role of Centre Manager as very useful or quite useful. Half the Centre Managers who responded would like to receive some additional training with Health and Safety and Behaviour Management being the two courses identified.
- The majority of Centre Managers find volunteers quite useful in supporting their role. Their views on volunteers are shown in the bar chart below.



- However, 38% of Centre Managers felt training for volunteers was inadequate. Comments included the fact that “volunteers need to know exactly what is expected of them before coming to a site” and that “there needs to be continuous training for volunteers with Centre Managers being informed of any gaps that we need to fill in.”.

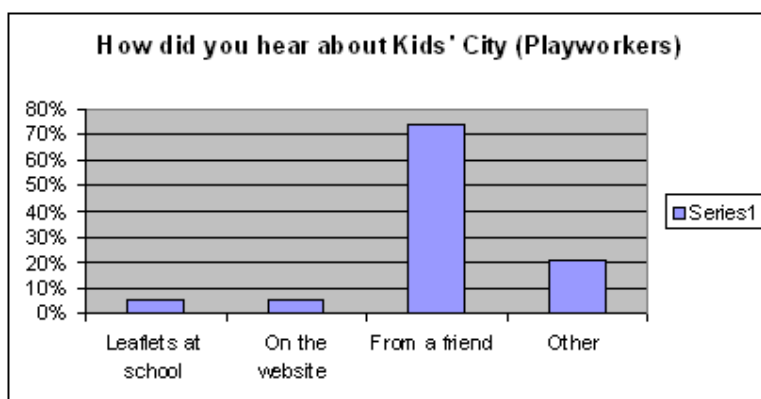


- Whilst 63% of Centre Managers who responded felt they received enough support in their work with volunteers, 38% did not know whether they were receiving enough support, suggesting that perhaps some more communication is needed between Kids' City Head Office and the Centre Managers to ensure they know what their role is in relation to volunteers.

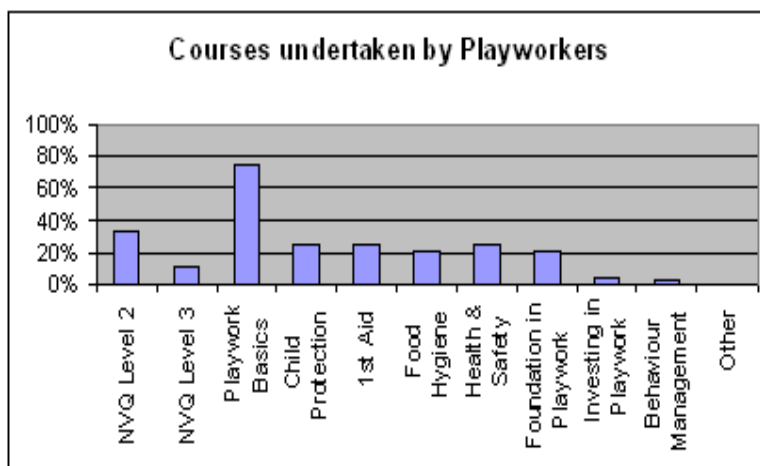
- The majority of Centre Managers (75%) identified that volunteers should only be allowed on site after a CRB check has been undertaken.
- **Improving the service:** as identified above a number of Centre Managers felt that volunteers could be better trained before they start on site. In addition they identified the importance for all staff to constantly be trained and retrained.
- A number of Centre Managers identified that they want to feel more appreciated by staff at Head Office and to be made to feel that they are working together. In particular Centre Managers recommended that there be an AGM for all staff.
- **Better communication with the wider community:** Centre Managers identified more publicity and posters in schools as being two key routes towards promoting Kids' City within the community.

## Playworker Responses

- As with most staff groups, the majority of playworkers (68%) became involved with Kids' City because they wanted to work with children, with training opportunities being the second most popular reason.
- The majority of playworkers heard about Kids' City through friend or family members. This is reflected in the bar chart below. For those who ticked 'other' from the options given, details given were through job centres and through Connexions.



- 79% of playworkers have received training as part of their role. The range of courses undertaken are shown in the bar chart below, with the majority of playworkers (74%) having undertaken Playworks Basics.

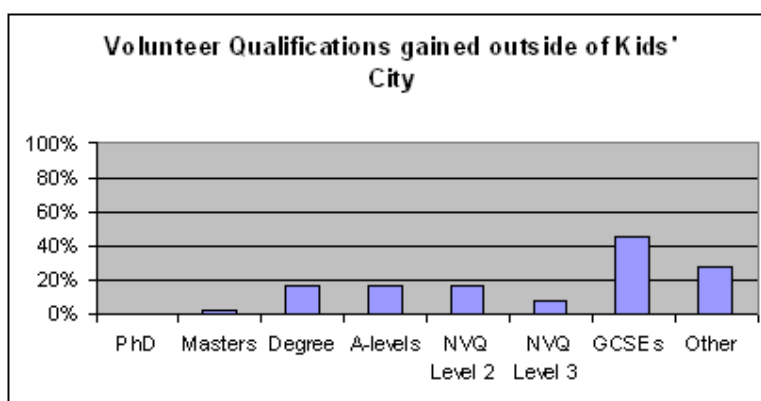


- All of those who had undertaken courses found the training to be either very useful or quite useful. 58% of staff would like to receive more training with proposals ranging from standard Kids' City Courses, such as NVQ2, child protection, first aid and health and safety, to courses outside Kids' City, such as FA coaching level 1-2, basketball coaching and special needs training.
- 84% of playworkers indicated that they feel their time with Kids' City is well used and 74% feel that their time is appreciated by Kids' City. The majority of playworkers do feel that they are encouraged to develop their role by Kids' City, although 21% did not feel this and did not feel that they were given adequate guidance by Kids' City. Clearer advice from Kids' City on what is expected in their role was identified as the main change that they would like to see made. That said 95% of playworkers who responded indicated that they are clear on what is expected of them in their work. Improved communication is key for all playworkers who would particularly like to know more about the training that is available to them and would like to see improved communication between the school, Head Office and the playworkers. One suggestion for better communication was a staff newsletter that could be posted on the web or e-mailed to staff.
- **Improving the service:** aside from improving communication to staff on the ground, as detailed above, the majority of suggestions for improvement were around improving the activities for kids, in particular:
  - Sticking to the programme activities set
  - Playing more games with kids,
  - Providing equipment for activities
  - Organising more day trips with greater structure, with examples of trips being theme parks, bowling and swimming.
  - Providing more than 4 members of staff per school

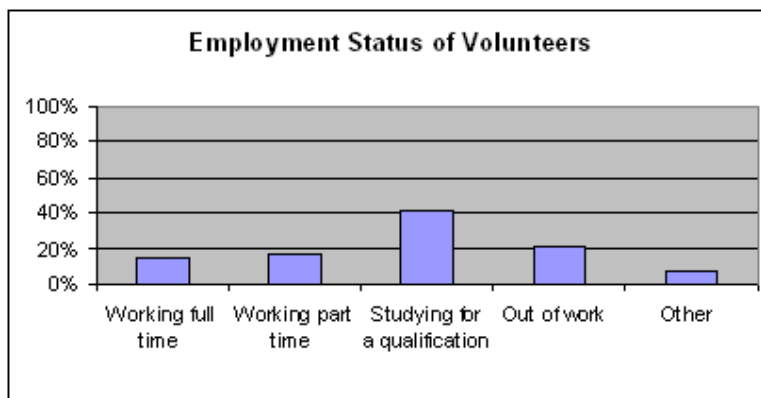
- Improving communication with the wider community:** the majority of playworkers suggested better advertising, with TV advertisements, web videos, newspaper advertising and leafleting at schools being the examples given. One playworker suggested that if Kids' City ensure their staff are happy in their work setting they will provide a better service for the children and then the service will be promoted through word of mouth.

## Volunteer Responses

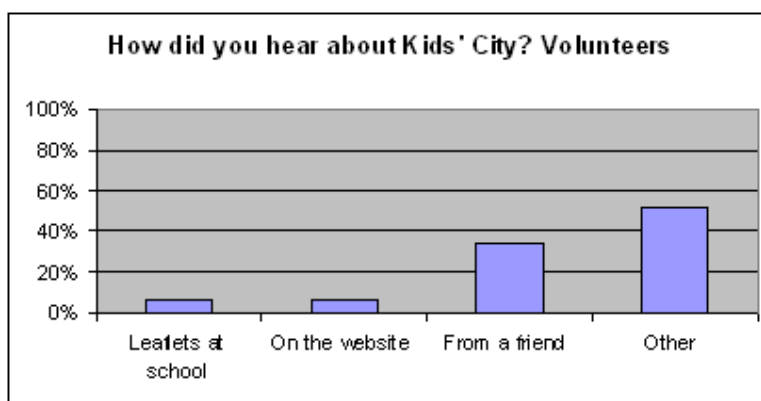
- We asked volunteers some questions about their profile. The majority of volunteers had some level of qualification external to their work with Kids' City. Details of qualifications are given in the bar chart below. Where respondents ticked 'other' details given were "course undertaken in different countries", and "City and Guild qualifications".



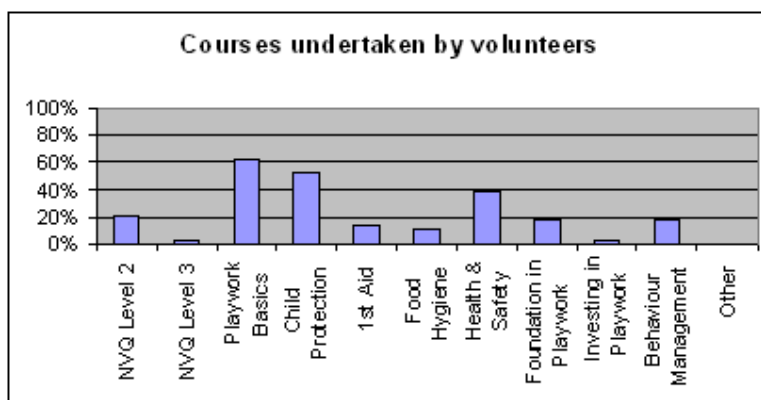
- The majority of volunteers who responded (41%) are studying full time. Details of current employment status are given in the bar chart below.



- The majority of volunteers (69%) do not have children. Of those volunteers who do have children, 89% are aged 11 and over.
- As with all people working for Kids' City the main reasons for volunteers working with Kids' City were a desire to work with children (79%) and training opportunities (52%) Other reasons given by volunteers for getting involved with Kids' City were "to improve their English", "enable them to get a job by gaining work experience" and because "family was involved with Kids' City."
- The majority of volunteers found out about Kids' City through other sources than those listed on the questionnaire, although a significant number found out about Kids' City from friends. Details of how volunteers found out about Kids' City are given in the bar chart below. For those who ticked 'other' details included "volunteering notices at the university", "information provided through employment programmes and job centres" and "through church".



- 83% of volunteers who responded have received training as part of their role, with the main course undertaken being Playworks Basics. Details are given in the bar chart below.



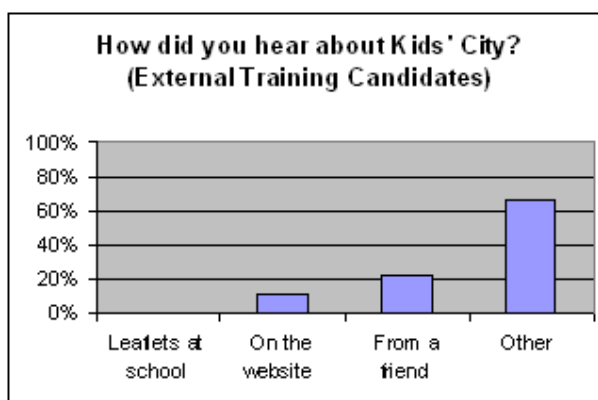
- Of those who had undertaken training all found the training to be useful or quite useful. 76% of volunteers indicated that they would like to receive more training, with the majority of volunteers wanting to undertake NVQ level 3, followed by first aid, behaviour management, NVQ2 and Health and Safety. A number of non core Kids' City courses were noted including English lessons, IT literacy and assertiveness training.
- Only 7% of volunteers who responded thought that expenses were not high enough, with the suggestion being that lunch expenses should be higher. The majority of volunteers felt that they received expenses quickly enough, although one volunteer commented that "sometimes you have to remind Head Office that you need your expenses".
- 28% of volunteers who responded indicated that they did not feel that they were using all their skills at Kids' City, with one volunteer suggesting that "It would be useful if there were more computers at Head Office, so that volunteers could use their computer skills." All volunteers felt that their time at Kids' City is appreciated and 83% of volunteers felt that they were receiving enough guidance to fulfil their role adequately. This was also reflected in the fact that 83% of volunteers felt that they were clear on what is expected of them in their work. The majority of volunteers felt that they were being given enough support on site.
- The majority of volunteers who responded identified that they were receiving enough information from Kids' City to support them in their role, although volunteer comments echoed some of the Centre Managers concerns about the preparation of volunteers prior to starting on site, with one volunteer suggesting that they should be briefed at the beginning of each week on what is expected of them. Another volunteer suggested that Kids' City make regular phone calls to volunteers to update them, and another suggested a newsletter on the website would keep them informed about changes to Kids' City and to their role as volunteers.
- **Improving communications with the wider community:** The majority of volunteers who responded suggested more advertising to make people aware of Kids' City, with local newspapers, and websites being an important part of this publicity. Another suggestion was to get children involved in community projects through fun days during the holiday, or an event or activity that encourages Kids' City children to bring along their friends. One volunteer suggested trying to get local companies involved in sponsorship. Leafleting across the schools in each borough was suggested by a number of volunteers, along with posters in schools.
- **Improving the service:** in terms of improving Kids' City volunteers echoed the concerns identified above that "volunteers should be given the right support for their needs". In particular, volunteers suggested that there should

be better job opportunities for volunteers, and better training, such as computer courses run at Head Office.

- A number of the comments focused on the facilities for the children, suggesting new equipment be provided on site such as books, games and puzzles. One volunteer stated “I think that Kids’ City needs to improve their facilities for kids at the playschemes, for example, all the kids have at Sunnyhill playscheme is hoops, flat footballs and old skateboards.” Better day trips were also identified as key, where children “go somewhere new, not just the park.”
- One volunteer suggested that a wider range of structured activities be organised on site, proposing dance or music activities. Another volunteer suggested that activities would be run more successfully if they were prepared in a structured way.
- A few volunteers suggested that Kids’ City should try to expand their service to more sites, but did not expand on how to go about this.

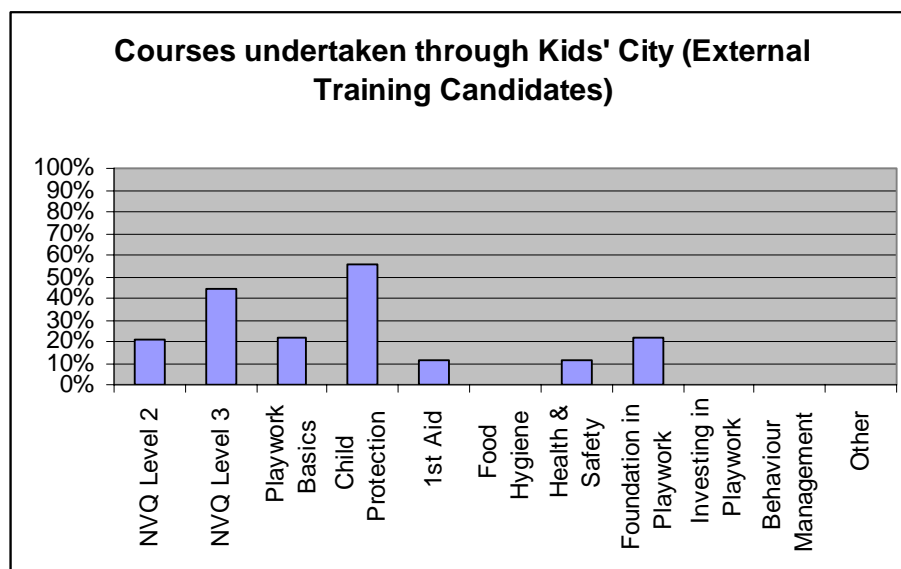
## External Training Candidate Responses

- The majority of External Training Candidates found out about Kids’ City from other sources than those listed on the questionnaire, other routes being “through their college”, “through their work”, or “through Local Authority Training booklets”. Details of how they found out about Kids’ City are given in the bar chart below.



- 67% of External Training Candidates ticked ‘other’ as their reason for getting involved with Kids’ City, with the main reason being the fact that Kids’ City were running the course that the candidate wanted to undertake, other reasons were location and range of activities offered at Kids City.

- The following bar chart shows the type of courses undertaken by the respondents. Child protection was the most popular course of those that responded, with 56% of respondents taking this course and 44% undertaking NVQ level 2.

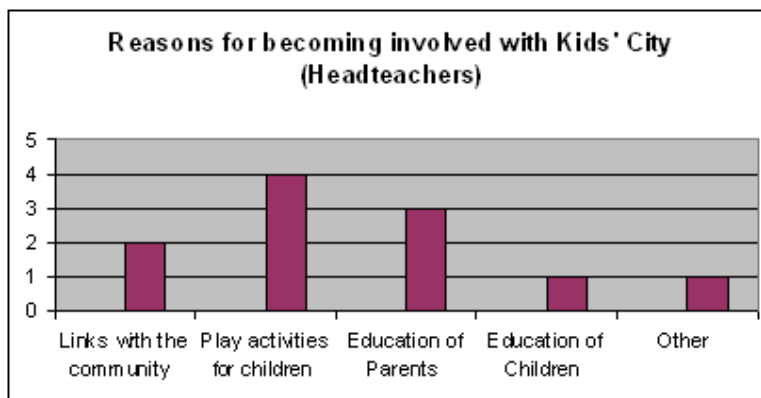


- 69% of External Training Candidates found the training useful or quite useful in the workplace, but 100% External Training Candidates who responded to the questionnaire found the training useful for developing in the workplace. 44% of respondents are looking to undertake more training with First Aid Course, Child Protection, NVQ level 3 and Behaviour Management being the most popular choice for future courses.
- 56% of External Training Candidates did not think the re-branding of the Trojans Scheme to Kids' City had had some or a significant impact on the charity. With only 22% thinking it had had either some or a significant impact on their involvement with the charity.
- 67% felt that Kids' City is providing enough information for their role with the charity.
- Improving communications with the wider community:** Suggestions for improving communications with the wider community included:
  - Sending information about courses to workplaces in Lambeth and Wandsworth
  - Offering courses in different areas to those that they are working in
  - More advertising about Kids' City through college publications, leafleting and posters

- Improving the service:** a few External Training Candidates felt that Kids' City staff could be friendlier and understanding when dealing with external candidates and in particular one candidate indicated that the Kids' City students have help from Kids' City with their folders. However, in general responses were positive about the service, with one candidate indicating "From my experience Kids' City doesn't need improving"

## Headteacher Responses

- The majority of Headteachers (four out of the five headteachers interviewed) got involved with Kids' City because of the play activities for children, although the education of parents was also an issue for three of the Headteachers interviewed, and the education of children an issue for two of them. One Headteacher commented "I think all these reasons are equally important, but I am not aware how parents are educated by Kids City?" suggesting that some Headteachers are not being provided with information about all of the activities of Kids' City. For two schools the decision to work with Kids' City was undertaken by a previous Headteacher, although one of those indicated that the reason for continuing to work with Kids' City was the play activities for children. Reasons are reflected in the bar chart below.

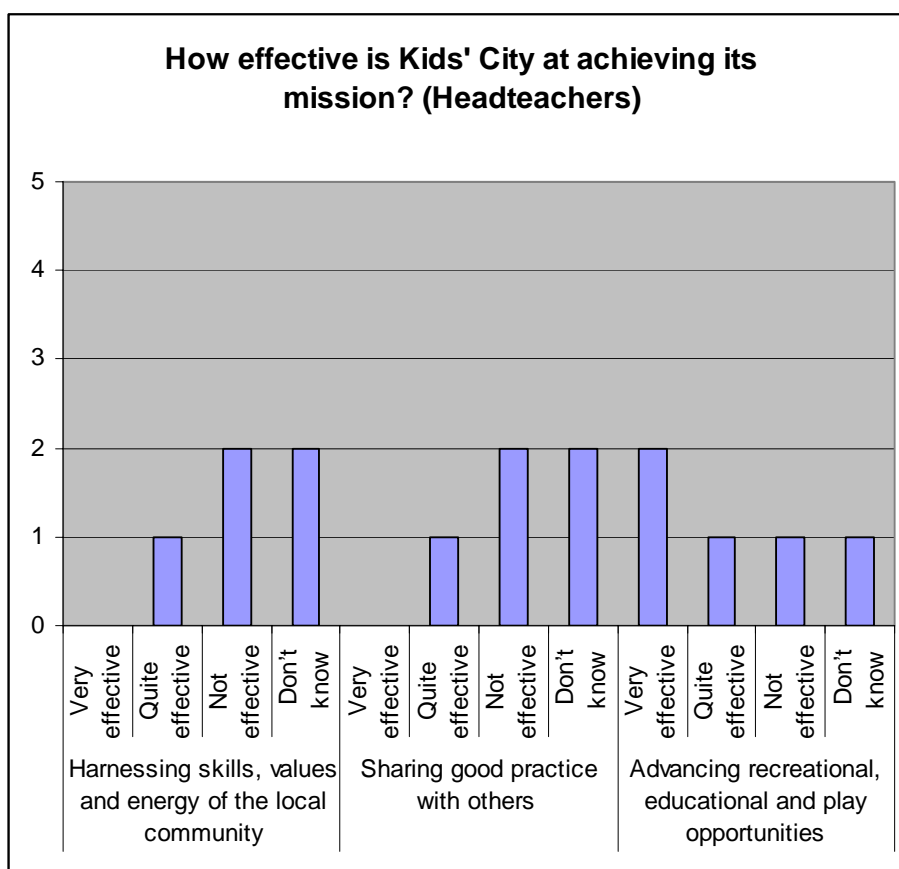


- Four of the five Headteachers interviewed do consider Kids' City to be part of the extended schools scheme, with one Headteacher not sure whether or not this will be the case, indicating that "we are giving though to the place of Kids' City in the school. It will only work going forward if we work closely together."
- The need to work closely together was something echoed by all the Headteachers, in particular the relationship with staff on site was seen as vital to the success of the scheme. One Headteacher summed this up by saying

that “the relationship with Kids’ City is dependent on the centre manager. It is important that staff are trained, not just in qualifications, but in how to manage parents, children and their relationship with the school.” However, comments were generally positive about the service, with a number of Headteachers commenting on the “very good service”.

- We asked the headteachers about how well they feel Kids’ City is achieving its stated mission to:
  - Harness the skills, values and energy of the local community;
  - Share good practice with others; and
  - Advance the educational, recreational and play activities for children in deprived families.

- The results of this are reflected in the bar chart below:



- The majority of Headteachers interviewed were not aware of Kids’ City’s mission to “harness the skills, values and energy of the local community”. One Headteacher summed this up by saying “Parents who use the service have not said anything about how they can get involved in helping the

community.” and another admitting “some parents do help with clubs, but I’m not sure how this links to parents in the community.”

- There was a similar response to Kids’ City’s mission to “share good practice with others”, with Headteachers commenting that they do not receive information about good practice, or feedback on activities.
- There was a better picture for Kids’ City’s aim to “advance the recreational, educational and play opportunities for children living in deprived communities”. However, Headteachers commented that they would prefer more tutored sessions to be run. One Headteacher conceded “It’s not always educational, but when it works its brilliant. It needs a good centre manager to work.”
- The majority of Headteachers did not feel that the re-branding of the Trojans Scheme to Kid’s City had had an impact on their involvement with the charity, with one Headteacher saying “We’re still calling it Trojans, but this will probably change over time”. For one Headteacher the re-branding has had a significant negative impact because “Kid is not a word we use at our school as we think it’s slang.”
- The majority of Headteachers interviewed (three out of five) would prefer more communication from Kids’ City, with one Headteacher commenting “I don’t know what they do. Termly feedback on activities would be useful e.g. activities, numbers attended. The governing body do ask about this.” The relationship and communication between the school and the Centre Manager was a key element of this communication, with one Headteacher admitting that “the turnover of Kids’ City site staff makes it difficult to build relationships”. The need for the school to be updated on changes in staff was also identified as key, with one Headteacher recounting that “There have been four replacements of the centre manager since I’ve been here. Recently a new centre manager was appointed and I had not been told. It was only when I met her on the school premises that I knew she was involved with the school.”
- Two Headteachers indicated that communications were working well, but this was partly dependent on their relationship with the Centre manager, with one Headteacher commenting “Kids’ City have an annual update. It’s fine how it is. Our manager is good and shares information with us daily.” The relationship between the school and the centre manager is crucial to their involvement with Kids’ City with one Headteacher indicating that “we were on the brink of pulling out of Kids’ City, but when the manager was changed and replaced by a manager who worked well with the school and the kids and parents we changed our decision.”. One Headteacher suggested improving communication between the school and Kids’ City by inviting teachers to participate in activities or run a session. The message from all Headteachers

was the need for Kids' City to work in partnership with the school, from the site staff to the Head Office.

- **Improving communications to the wider community:** Headteachers had a number of suggestions for improving communications to the wider community. These included:
  - Open evenings/open days or workshops for parents;
  - Playground presence of Kids' City to 'sell' their services and some taster sessions for children;
  - More publicity about how parents can get involved with the scheme;
  - Leafleting of all parents in the school.
  
- **Improving its service:** A number of suggestions from Headteachers were linked to better joint working between Kids' City and the school, suggesting regular meetings to share information about each organisation. Feedback on numbers of children attending sessions, the activities taking place, and any potential issues like health and safety were identified as being useful, with one Headteacher requesting termly written feedback to update their governing body.
  
- One Headteacher felt that there was tension between the staff working for Kids' City and their management of staff on the ground, suggesting that management visits can sometimes aggrieve staff and then they leave. This Headteacher felt uncomfortable feeding back areas for improvement direct to Kids' City Head Office because they are concerned that this has not been handled sensitively with staff.
  
- Cost was seen as a problem for many parents and two Headteachers suggested paying for sessions weekly so that more parents can access the service. One Headteacher conceded that "Cost is a problem for parents at our school. Asking for money up front means that some parents cannot afford to attend."
  
- One Headteacher suggested that better structured activities would increase the number of children involved in the scheme, suggesting that "Kids' City need to run specific activities and enable children to learn new skills. Currently the profile of parents using this service is parents who work. Kids' City need to start getting parents to use the service because it is offering new opportunities for their kids"
  
- However, in general Headteachers were happy that the service is now working adequately with one Headteacher commenting "it works for the children who use it."

## Partnership and Funding Organisation Responses

- Both organisations who responded to the stakeholder survey had heard about Kids' City through funding applications. Both organisations indicated that education of children was an important factor in deciding to partner with Kids' City, with one organisation additionally citing play activities for children and the fact that Kids' City meet their aims as being key influencing factors.
- The organisations were split on the ability of Kids' City to achieve its stated mission of "harnessing the skills, values and energy of the local community" with one organisation indicating that Kids' City were very successful at doing this and one indicating that they did not know. This was also the case for Kids' City "sharing good practice with others". In terms of the Kids' City mission to advance the "educational, recreational and play opportunities for children living in deprived areas" the organisations responded that it was "very effective" and "quite effective" respectively. This echoes the views of the Headteachers, which could lead us to conclude that the latter aim for Kids' City is the one with which it is most closely associated. Both organisations were happy with the level of communication that they have with Kids' City, with one organisation stating "in our experience Kids' City is good at keeping funders informed."
- Kids' City was meeting the expectations of both respondents, with one organisation indicating that the benefits gained from working with Kids' City was closely aligned to the organisation objective of "local children receiving a healthy heart message and being given the opportunity to take part in physical activities."
- Neither organisation thought that the re-branding of the Trojans Scheme to Kids' City had made a difference on their involvement with the scheme.
- **Improving communication with the wider community:** neither organisation felt that this was needed.
- **Improving the service:** One organisation did not know whether it would continue to partner with Kids' City in the future with the other organisation indicating that it would not partner with Kids' City in the future. The reasons given for this were that it is their funding policy not to give repeat funding. However, this organisation stated that they would welcome any opportunities to be involved with Kids' City in the future should they decide to expand their services. The factor that would influence partnering decisions in the future was given as expansion of the work of Kids' City, to support new and different funding.



## Response by Trustees

We regularly survey stakeholders to ensure that our services are meeting the needs of the local community and we are very grateful to Elizabeth Ramsay for this, our first comprehensive survey of stakeholders that has assisted us greatly as we plan for the future.

We were delighted to see that parents gave Kids' City 9/10 and that most children could not find anything that they least liked about Kids' City with 86% saying that they had done new or different things and 93% that they had made new friends.

We were pleased to see confirmed that we are successful in meeting the needs of disadvantaged families and are once again considering the perennial problem of how to facilitate weekly cash payments in order to become even more accessible to low income families. We are glad to note that the majority of parents say that they like Kids' City because their children like it and that location and cost scored highly, underlining the effectiveness of our pricing policy and supporting our constant drive to keep prices low.

Trustees were happy to find that the great majority of paid and unpaid staff felt appreciated, properly guided and had clear expectations but noted that Centre Managers were a group that did not feel appreciated. Consequently, Centre Managers (CMs) were invited to a series of discussions culminating in a round table with Trustees in November 2006.

We concluded that a) CMs were not as disillusioned as it might seem ( they had not been given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire properly) and b) managers were under the greatest pressure to manage relationships with schools, particularly with school receptionists and premises officers. Many of these relationships were helpful and engaging but in some cases managers were certain that the after-school scheme was viewed in their school as an unwanted irritation. This was demoralising for staff and in some cases inhibited the service they were able to provide.

However, best practice was also described. One manager said "I see XXXX (rep from the school) for a few minutes every day, she lets me know if anything is wrong and tells me what a good job we are doing. I feel that we are valued and supported yet it boils down to just moments when we touch base." Our CEO conducted a further review; correlating environment with attendance it was clear that the most successful services were those where the manager feels that they have the school's support and can develop their project. Consequently the Trustees have approved further investment in relationship building with key school personnel.



Information to parents and Headteachers stood out strongly as an area in which we need to improve. Implementation of a new communications strategy is underway which includes a regular Parents' Forum, Parents' Handbook, Headteacher's briefings, attendance and financial information for school management and more targeted newsletters to individual schemes. All children throughout the schools will receive leaflets at the beginning of school term. Taster sessions and productions for school assemblies have been successfully piloted at three branches and will be rolled out throughout the organisation.

Senior staff also undertook a review of the activities, confirming that the range is exceptional but perceptions about what takes place are widely differing. More needs to be done by us to express the benefits of play-based learning activities and the rights of the child to play. This is borne out by most children reporting that they liked playing outside with scooters, skateboards, skipping etc, playing games with friends while elsewhere in the survey more structure is called for by adults. Consequently we feel that we are striking the right balance of flop spots, organised activities, play and social time and we believe that over 85% of activities are taking place as planned, often led by an expert in the subject area. We have produced a dvd through funding by The Media Trust which explains in images what goes on in Kids' City which is particularly useful for parents and school staff who can't otherwise experience it.

Taking advantage of free public transport now on offer to children, and clarification from Ofsted about rules, we have planned more trips. We have taken seriously the comments that in some projects there is not enough equipment and are investing funds to improve security and storage. We noted too that we need to facilitate more imaginative play such as dressing up clothes and constructions, which are currently limited by lack of appropriate storage space.

Training is an area that Trustees have consistently committed to and Kids' City has one of the best-trained play workforces in the country. All personnel are fully trained for their role, having to complete a two-day training course and a half-day induction session before going on site. Continuous professional development, including that of Trustees, contributes to the charity's stability, sustainability and confidence in its ability to innovate and inspire.

The Trustees are committed to a high quality play, education and care service for the lowest possible cost. Kids' City sees itself as a partner in Every Child Matters and part of the team around the child. It is a key player in the Voluntary and Community Sector engagement with the Every Child Matters agenda across London. What we have learned from this survey will be shared with others and have a wider impact than only Kids' City's population and we especially thank Elizabeth and all of those who took part in the survey and the follow up reviews.

Sue Branson, Chair of Trustees  
February 2007